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The "soft skills" Initiative at the CIS

By Tina Freyburg & Charlotte Reinisch

What happens when university lecturers perceive that some of their students are highly intelligent, but are not able to make use of their knowledge? What happens when they realize that students are highly motivated, but do not know how to channel their motivation into good quality contributions? Or, to put it differently, what happens when lecturers recognize that they should not only lecture, let's say, inferential statistics, but also teach students fundamental courtesy, teamwork, self-discipline, critical faculties and communication skills, among other things? Eventually, teaching soft skills together with hard skills would mean teaching the whole person – something that is still not possible the way seminars at the CIS are organized. The acquisition of soft skills is nevertheless important to students' success not only in class but also later on the job market. Given their importance, it might be a misnomer to call them soft skills, as that may suggest that they are just a nice little add-on.

Soft skills matter, without a doubt. To this end, the Arbeitsstelle für Hochschuldidaktik (AfH) at the University of Zurich even offered a series of lectures on this subject in the fall term of 2007, highlighting that in addition to specialized knowledge of one's particular discipline, soft skills are recognized as competencies decisive for one's studies, career, and private life. Soft skills are qualifications in the field of communication, presentation, and working techniques. This makes them a precondition for result-oriented and satisfying processes of communication, decision-making and working. And the good news is: soft skills can be learnt!

The initiative "soft skills" at the CIS aims at teaching students communicative, social and organizational skills that they are expected to have, but which are not taught as part of a normal course of studies at university. The founding members of the initiative are five current and former research and teaching assistants in political science who know each other through the NCCR "Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century" and who experienced that the students in their seminars were facing problems in presentations, writing papers and project management. Since the winter term of 2006, therefore, they offer undergraduate students the possibility of experiencing and practicing these competencies each semester in workshops free of charge. These courses are introductory, providing a forum for addressing challenges, practicing techniques and exchanging tips and hints.

In this Issue

Current workshops include:

– "Put away that highlighter!" is one of the key messages of the course on efficient and critical reading given by Anna Kalbhenn and Tina Freyburg. Academic literature usually does not read like a novel, making reading for a course etc. quite time consuming. In their two-part course, Freyburg and Kalbhenn seek to enable the participants to read in a target-oriented manner and to make them sensible to critical points of theoretical, empirical and methodological issues.

– The limited time available to students when carrying out their course work is a problem that Lutz Krebs addresses in his workshop on time management. Krebs familiarizes the participants not only with several techniques for budgeting time and avoiding time killers, but also touches on possible underlying problems of motivation.

– How to present successfully research problems or scientific results in front of a larger group is taught in a two-part course by Charlotte Reinisch (project manager, UniFrauenstelle Zurich). The first part combines a short, theoretical introduction in rhetoric and presentation skills with hands-on exercises. In her workshop, she uses a video camera to record the participants while giving a presentation in front of the group. Each student receives intensive feedback on their presentation and also has the possibility of observing her- or himself on screen. This is a rare but valuable opportunity from which even experienced presenters can benefit greatly. In the workshop's second part, the students apply their newly acquired skills to improve their presentations further.

– In the age of Google, literature research seems very easy. The sources found, however, often do not comply with academic requirements and the search is rarely systematic and comprehensive. In their workshop, Marie-Christine Fontana (research and teaching assistant, University of Lausanne) and Christine Lercher show how to search professionally for scientific articles and books. They do not only introduce data bases, library catalogues and other useful tools for literature search available in the internet, but also give participants the opportunity to carry out computer-based exercises to practically implement the newly acquired skills.

The initiative "soft skills" is up and running - we hope that CIS members will refer their students to our workshops!

Contact:
Tina Freyburg
Charlotte Reinisch
freyburg@eup.gess.ethz.ch
charlotte.reinisch@ufg.uzh.ch

http://www.cis.ethz.ch/education/softskills

CIS Newsflash

– Peter Selb is the new junior professor for empirical methods at the Department of Politics and Administration, University of Konstanz.

– Daniel Kübler is now professor for public governance and social planning at the Institute for Social Planning and Urban Development at the University of Applied Sciences of Northwestern Switzerland.

– Dirk Lehmkühl has obtained a chair in European politics, University of St. Gallen.

– Thomas Sattler was awarded an ETH Medal for his disseration "The Political Economy of International Finance", finished in 2007.

– The MACIS program now has the largest number of applicants of any of the specialized MA programs at the ETH Zurich. The program director, Professor Frank Schimmelfennig, said the medium-term goal is to secure more funding for MACIS students.

– Dirk Leuffen received the Lorenz-von-Stein Award for his Ph.D. thesis on French European policy-making in the context of divided government. The Lorenz-von-Stein Society awards this prize annually to the best dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Mannheim. In addition to the honor, Dirk Leuffen received € 1000.

– Victor Mauer has won the Golden Owl award for "most liked instructor." This recognition is awarded on the department level through a student survey carried out by the ETH's student organization .

How Independent are Swiss Parliamentarians?

The vast majority of Swiss Members of Parliament (MPs) see themselves as representing their own views and convictions rather than the preferences of their voters or party. This is one of the main results of a recent survey among all Members of the Swiss Federal Assembly conducted by Stefanie Bailer, Sarah Bütikofer, Simon Hug and Tobias Schulz.

By Sarah Bütikofer

In the context of an ongoing, SNF-funded research project entitled "Parliamentary Decisions: Electoral Consideration, Party Pressure and Strategic Calculations", a CIS research team conducted an internet-based survey among all Swiss parliamentarians between December 2006 and June 2007. Of the 246 MPs 160 participated, yielding a response rate of 65 percent (National Councilors had a response rate of 64 percent, State Councilors 70 percent). All parties and constituencies were represented in the sample, roughly proportionally to their effective parliamentary power. The results show that Swiss MPs overwhelmingly consider the representation of their own views – in contrast to the representation of the views of their voters, their party, and other actors/groups – to be important in how they play their role as parliamentarians.

In addressing the question of MPs' conception(s) of political representation and how it influences their legislative behaviour, the research team tried to assess the importance of institutional factors, such as those related to the electoral system, and to examine differences across parties. The Swiss case moreover offers an excellent opportunity to improve our knowledge of the factors that may shape MPs' perceptions of their representational roles. First, the two houses of the Federal Assembly are elected by different rules, which allow us to analyze specific incentives linked with majoritarian and proportional electoral systems. Second, in the case of proportional elections, the magnitude of the districts varies widely. This makes it possible to assess the effects of the degree of proportionality. Third, as parties at the cantonal level are responsible for candidate selection and as the features of party systems vary across districts, it is possible to gauge the impact of cantonal party systems.

As indicated above, the Swiss Federal Assembly is bicameral. The 46-seat upper house (Council of States) represents the 26 Swiss cantons; each canton has two seats and the half-cantons have one seat each. The members of the Council of States are elected by the eligible voters of their canton, in accordance with cantonal law. The lower house (National Council) has 200 members and represents the Swiss people. Here, too, the cantons are the electoral districts, each canton having between one and 34 seats to distribute in each election by means of proportional representation. Moreover, the idea of the so-called Milizsystem ("militia parliament") is still predominant in Switzerland: politicians are not professionals in the sense of engaging full-time in politics. Rather, they retain some other occupation and perform their political duties and roles during certain periods of the year. Correspondingly, an MP´s workload is part-time rather than full-time and active participation in the Federal Assembly simply involves setting aside one's other professional activities for a certain period of time without full financial compensation.

The MPs were asked to indicate how important it was to them to represent various groups or interests in the leg-

Table 1. Importance of the representation of various groups and opinions, all MPs.

	N	Very important (%)	Important (%)	Indifferent (%)	Not very important (%)	Not at all important (%)
Own views	152	77	19	3	1	0
Own voters	151	55	32	11	1	1
Voters cantonal party	148	40	36	20	3	1
Voters national party	148	27	35	29	7	2
Cantonal party position	148	29	41	23	5	2
National party position	146	27	44	22	6	1
Other/interest groups	106	37	15	14	21	13

islature. Using a five-point scale, from 1 "not important" to 5 "very important" MPs were invited to rate the importance of representing: a) all voters of their party at the national level; b) all voters of their party at the cantonal level; c) their own voters; d) their national-level party; e) their cantonal-level party; f) their own views; g) other groups.

Approximately 150 respondents answered these questions. Table 1 shows that MPs pay attention to all the suggested groups and opinions: they are all considered to be "important" or "very important" by a majority of MPs. Nevertheless, the representation of an MP's own views is apparently most important of all - almost 80 percent rate this as "very important". This is followed by the representation of "their own voters" (55 percent). Notably, Table 1 also indicates that MPs claim to pay attention to the voters of their party at the cantonal level rather than at the national level, but when it comes to representing the party position in parliament the cantonal-national difference largely disappears. Furthermore, the Table suggests more variation in the representation of interest groups and other similar interests: 37 percent of MPs rate such interests as very important, about the same percentage regards them as not (very) important, making such groups the only one to be considered unimportant by a substantial share of Swiss MPs.

Turning to some more detailed results, Table 2 offers a comparative view of the upper and lower houses of parliament. Specifically, this Table presents the average level of importance attached to the seven response categories by MPs (using the same 1-5 scales). The research did not unearth notable differences between the two houses: the same three response options are ranked as being most important by MPs in both houses, namely their own views, then that of their own voters, and then the voters of their party at the cantonal level.

Table 2: Average importance of the representation of various groups and opinions.

	Council of States		National Council	
	Importance	N	Importance	N
Own views	4.9	29	4.6	123
Own voters	4.6	29	4.4	122
Voters cantonal party	3.9	27	4.1	121
Voters national party	3.4	27	3.9	119
Cantonal party position	3.5	28	4.0	120
National party position	3.6	29	4.0	119
Other/interest groups	3.8	23	3.4	83

While Councilors of States and National Councilors do not differ dramatically, there are some interesting differences. The representation of one's own views, for instance, is rated as "very important" by 90 percent of the Councilors of States. "Only" 72 percent of National Councilors feel the same way. Similarly, representing one's own voters is considered "very important" by 65 percent of the Councilors of States, whereas about half of the National Councilors felt that way. In contrast, National Councilors seem to attach more importance to representing the supporters of their party (especially those at the national level) than their colleagues in the Council of States, and also pay more attention to their party's position (cantonal and national). Finally, Councilors of States are more responsive to other actors such as interest groups: 48 percent view this form of representation as "very important" and a further 13 percent as "important." As the Table shows, this is substantially more than among National Councilors. It is not surprising that Councilors of State estimated this aspect of representation as more important than did National Councilors. A member of the Council of State's workload is in reality far greater than that of a part-time job; once elected, the pursuit of a professional career is difficult. Consequently, members of the upper house depend on other financial compensation.

While these differences are not very large, they do seem to follow a systematic pattern. MPs in the Council of States appear to be guided mainly by their personal views and by the interests of their own voters. In the lower house, all types of interests or opinions reach a roughly similar level of importance – with the exception of interest groups. National Councilors, compared to the members of the upper house, are more strongly influenced by their party and by the supporters of their party. In other words, they appear to be less independent than Councilors of State. This contrast makes sense given the difference between the two houses in the electoral rules. To be successful in a majoritarian election, MPs in the upper house must be supported by a larger electoral basis. They must be able to reach beyond the core

group of their party supporters. Their electoral mandate is thus likely to reflect a more varied set of opinions and preferences.

From this point of view, it is not surprising that Councilors of State, compared to the members of the National Council, give relatively more importance to representing their own voters, and less importance to the voters of their party. In the future, Sarah Bütikofer and Simon Hug will analyze in more detail the role of such electoral system characteristics. If their hypothesis (above) is correct, the research team would also expect to be able to observe certain differences among members of the lower house: in small electoral districts, election candidates must mobilize a fairly broad-ranging segment of the electorate in order to secure one of the few seats on offer. As a consequence, they should pay less attention to the position of their own party and its voters than candidates operating in cantons where there are many seats to distribute.

The research project also encompasses a party comparison. Here, too, relatively small differences between the objects of comparison were found. Two parties stand out, however. The Swiss People's Party (SVP) and the Greens differ from the rest by attaching more importance to the national party as well as to the latter's voters (rated as "very important" by approximately 40 percent of MPs from these parties, as compared to roughly 20 percent of MPs from other parties). This difference, the researchers suggest, reflects the higher degree of programmatic homogeneity of the SVP and the Greens. The cantonal SVP and Green parties vary little in their ideological stances on core issues. Among other parties, in contrast, regional differences are more pronounced. Furthermore, in the case of the SVP another element comes into play. Not only are the various cantonal sections relatively homogeneous, but the MPs also attach much more importance to representing the party's views. Many SVP MPs consider it to be more important to represent the preferences of their party and its voters than to represent their own views. This finding matches findings in other studies about the rise of the SVP.

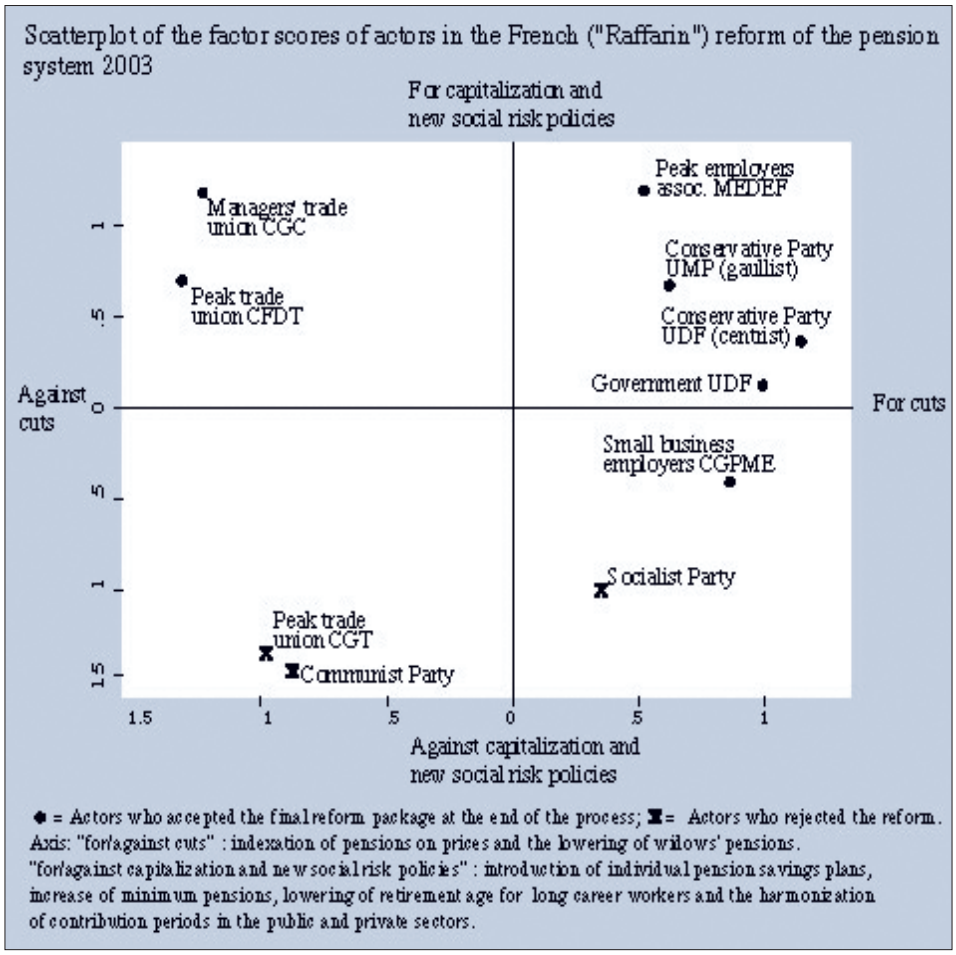
Contact:
Sarah Bütikofer
sarah.buetikofer@ipz.uzh.ch

Neither Inertia nor Dismantling: The Restructuring of Continental European Pension Regimes

Over the last thirty years, successive governments in France, Germany and Switzerland implemented far-reaching pension reforms, against the expectations of the most prominent welfare state theorists. Silja Häusermann's doctoral thesis analyzes these reforms and explains the governments' surprising reform capacity with a new theoretical model of post-industrial welfare reform politics that builds on the analysis of coalition dynamics in multidimensional policy-reform spaces. All major changes were the result of reform packages combining benefit cuts for some beneficiaries with an expansion of coverage for others.

By Silja Häusermann

The thesis builds on three puzzles: firstly, continental pension schemes are not "frozen landscapes", as the bulk of neo-institutionalist welfare state literature suggested at the end of the 1990s. There has indeed been ample institutional change in most continental European countries over the last two decades, not only in the level of pension benefits, but also, and in particular, in the very logic and structure of these social insurance schemes. Moreover, not all reforms were restrictive: the introduction of means-tested pension minima, capitalized pension funds or educational pension credits for non-employed women are reforms that actually expand pension coverage for certain social groups. The second surprising feature - or puzzle – concerning pension reforms is that most of them (benefit cuts, increase in the age of retirement, extension of the required contribution period) went against the interests of the core stakeholders of the industrial welfare states, namely the standard male employees of the industrial sector. Neo-institutionalism would predict that the institutions have consolidated the power of these core stakeholders over time, which would enable them to veto any retrenchment of their benefits. However, this group's pension rights have deteriorated considerably in most countries. The third puzzle deals with the new winners of the expansive elements of the reforms: Many of them



● = Actors who accepted the final reform package at the end of the process; ■ = Actors who rejected the reform.
Axis: "for/against cuts" : indexation of pensions on prices and the lowering of widows' pensions.
"for/against capitalization and new social risk policies" : introduction of individual pension savings plans, increase of minimum pensions, lowering of retirement age for long career workers and the harmonization of contribution periods in the public and private sectors.

were so-called new social risk policies, i.e. they favor post-industrial risk groups, which are particularly weak in terms of political representation and power: women, young families and labor market outsiders.

Simply put: the recent reforms of the continental pension regimes I researched in my PhD have introduced the very kind of policies that the dominant welfare state theories – power resources theory and neo-institutionalism - do not expect to occur. Power resources theory considers pension politics as a conflict between labor and capital. Authors writing from this theoretical perspective assume that the economic crisis, post-industrialization and globalization would strengthen the power of capital and lead to a dismantling of existing pension rights. Hence, they are unable to account for the many expansive reforms we have witnessed in recent years. Neo-institutionalists, by contrast, assume that mechanisms of path-dependency and institutional feedback reinforce the power of the core constituencies of beneficiaries over time, thereby preventing any restrictive reforms. This hypothesis has proved wrong, too. In my thesis, I show that the failure of both theoretical approaches results from the fact that most of the existing literature adopts too narrow a perspective, focusing either on retrenchment or on new social risks or on the introduction of new capitalized pension pillars. However, these different dimensions of reform must be analyzed jointly, because they are part of the same multidimensional policy space.

In this vein, my theoretical model can be outlined as follows: it holds that the pension policy agendas of continental European countries comprise four kinds of issues: a) retrenchment of existing rights; b) new modes of financing (capitalized pension funds); c) targeted benefits for particular risk groups; d) improvement of women's pension rights. The main hypothesis is that these issues generate cross-cutting conflict lines: retrenchment is fought along the old class lines, juxtaposing left and right. The introduction of capitalized pension saving schemes (what we know as the second pillar in Switzerland), however, divides the preferences of high- vs. low-skilled beneficiaries. Targeted benefits are in the interest of labor market outsiders, but not insiders, and gender equality implies cultural value-conflicts, which cross-cut the old class boundaries. If governments combine these diverse elements in a single reform proposal, they create opportunities for political exchange and coalition formation in a multidimensional policy space. And if the institutional framework of decision-making allows for such variable and flexible coalition formation, major reforms may be enacted by very heterogeneous, broad, cross-class coalitions.

For the empirical analysis of conflict lines, the project included both a cross-sectional and a longitudinal axis of comparison of actor positions and coalition formations. German, French and Swiss pension regimes all display strong continental features and faced (and still face) similar challenges, but they differ massively with regard to the institutional framework of decision-making, which allowed me to test the influence of these institutions on coalition-forma-

tion. In a longitudinal analysis, I included all 36 pension reform processes that have taken place in these three countries between 1970 and 2004. In order to trace the various conflict dimensions in those reforms over time, I coded the position of each actor involved in a specific reform process on all elements of the reform proposal at stake. This data set allowed me to analyze conflict lines and actor configurations over time by means of descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The latter allowed me to identify the dimensionality of the reforms and to represent the actor configurations graphically in a policy space. The figure attached to this contribution provides an example: it shows the French pension reform that took place in 2003. What we see is that the different reform issues indeed divided parties and trade unions along two separate dimensions. With regard to the lowering of pension levels (horizontal axis), the trade unions and Communist Party opposed a block of right-wing parties and employers´organizations. On the issue of capitalized pension savings plans and minimum pension rights for particular risk groups, however, the trade unions were sharply split. This allowed the right-wing government to divide the left and to foster a cross-class compromise with the more reformist trade unions.

In sum, the findings show that pension policy spaces in all three countries have become clearly multidimensional since the late 1980s, when the context of austerity transformed the positive-sum game of pension policy-making (various expansions of coverage for different groups) into a zero-sum game, thereby sharpening actors' preference profiles. Governments which drew on this multidimensionality were able to foster cross-class compromises and to enact major reforms. Indeed, all major successful reforms during this period in all three countries combined benefit cuts with expansive reforms for new social risk groups. Furthermore, all of these reform packages split the actors along several independent dimensions. When governments proposed more narrow proposals, focusing on retrenchment only – such as the French Juppé pension reform in 1995 or the 11th reform of the AHV-pension scheme in Switzerland – the reforms failed.

The thesis implies a politically relevant upshot: modernization of pension policy is possible even in "hard times" of growing needs and scarce resources, if policy makers exploit the multidimensionality of the policy space, and if the institutional framework of decision-making allows for some coalition flexibility. However, since reform capacity is not a value in itself, the crucial point lies in the substance of the reforms: continental pension schemes are not radically dismantled, nor do they converge on a liberal model of minimum social security. Rather, reforms combined cutbacks with an actual redesign of the pension architecture: basic insurance schemes are complemented with various means-tested benefits for low-income groups and with more individualized pension savings schemes for the middle and higher income classes. Hence, the distributional implications of these reforms vary strongly across different social groups, generating complex sets of winners and losers across the society. The focus on this redesign of institutional arrangements also shows that contemporary welfare state reforms are not a mere product of financial imperatives: rather, the room for maneuver of governments, and thus their political power and responsibility, is far greater than often assumed.

Contact:
Silja Häusermann
silja.haeusermann@ipz.uzh.ch

Energy Security and the Transformation of International Relations

The purpose of the project "Energy Security and the Transformation of International Relations" is to show how the dynamics in global energy markets affect the way energy consumers and producers interact with each other. The project is run by the Center for Security Studies at the CIS and is based on two international conferences, one organized together with the Swiss Re Centre for Global Dialogue in March 2007, the other held at the ETH Zurich in October 2007. The conference papers will be published in two edited volumes, one with several case studies and one analyzing the role of Russia.

by Jeronim Perovic

Energy security is currently at the top of the global agenda. Consumer countries are worried about obtaining guarantees for affordable supplies, while producing countries fear volatility in the market. Rapidly developing countries like China and India are straining the market by seeking out new supplies, generating uncertainties for OECD consumers. Russia is increasingly aggressive in the political use of its energy resources; and the US and the EU, major energy consumers, are actively seeking new sources, including alternative fuels like solar power and ethanol. At the same time, expectations for continued global economic growth mean that demand for oil and gas, which are increasingly concentrated in the so-called "strategic crescent" stretching from the Middle East across the Caspian Sea into Western Siberia, will increase, exacerbating existing problems.

Energy - currently an explosive issue in international politics.

Western energy consumers will have to rely on imported fossil energy for the next 25-30 years, even if pro-active energy policies are put in place today. While focusing on independence is politically attractive, it distracts from the far more important task of successfully managing existing relations as well as the transition to a more sustainable and secure energy future.

Changes to the post-1973 system

The relationship between producers and consumers has been strained in the past, the most dramatic period being the 1973 OPEC-led boycott of oil shipments to the US and some of its Western allies. Notwithstanding these tensions, which continued to come to a head in connection with violent conflict in the Middle East, the US and European consumer countries continued to work with the oil-rich regimes, even though they did not necessarily play by democratic rules and free-market principles. The relative stability of the post-1973 system was due to a simple convergence of interests: The Middle East was interested in preserving the Western market for its oil. In an effort to reduce Western alienation and the opportunity costs for alternative energy supplies, the Middle East became increasingly dependent on the West for economic and military security. While this system survived the end of the Cold War, its stability is now in question due to changes in markets, politics, and perceptions.

Because global demand for oil is expected to grow faster than production, the energy market is tight and oil prices are high. While OECD countries were the major destination market for

Middle Eastern oil until recently, today, China and other fast-growing Asian countries present alternatives in terms of a diversification of demand. Parallel to this, there is concern about underinvestment in the energy sector due to the resurrection of "energy nationalism" in a number of key oil-producing states. Governments in countries like Russia and Venezuela are embarking on an increasingly restrictive course; production-sharing agreements and joint ventures are called off, concessions and licenses are being retracted, and there have been cases of outright expropriations. By 2005, national oil companies (NOCs) controlled a staggering 77 per cent of the known global oil reserves. The private international oil companies (IOCs) have unrestricted access to less than ten per cent of the world's oil and gas resource base. An additional six per cent is owned by partially or fully privatized Russian companies, the rest being jointly exploited by NOCs and IOCs.

On the political level, oil producers are increasingly assertive of their own interests and use energy as a means to bolster domestic power and increase their role in international security affairs. In fact, most of the current sense of alarm over energy dependence in Western consumer countries is attributed to a feeling that power has shifted to the producers. Until a few years ago, when oil prices were low and production abundant, it was the producers who felt dependent on consumers. This power shift has coincided with a number of other worrisome developments, such as increasing authoritarian tendencies, anti-Western sentiments among segments of the populations, and military build-up. The anxiety in the West is thus to a large extent caused by the loss of control rather than being due to any actual change in the behavior of the producing countries – which in fact continue to supply the world with oil and gas at growing rates.

Yet, in a market where all parties are so closely interconnected, all sides will be affected by shocks to the system. The protection of the energy supply chain from terrorism and natural disasters is of interest to all parties. The challenge is to find a new balance between producers and consumers against the background of the changes in the market. The problem is that despite the apparent shared interest in the stability of the system, there are different views on the threats to the stability of this system and on how to achieve stability. These differences of perception are preventing producers and consumers from agreeing on a new model of governing their energy relations.

Challenges for energy diplomacy

Producers may not play by the same market rules and may have authoritarian regimes that are not necessarily to the liking of the West. At the same time, producers certainly have no interest in alienating their custumers, and wish to be perceived as a secure source of energy, offering prices that are affordable to their clients. Thus, producers are also very much dependent on consumers, making the relationship an interdependent one. Consumers and producers have to come to terms with these interdependencies and face up to the challenges that are threatening the stability of the energy market. Against the background of growing mutual distrust and diversification away from each other, it is necessary to build on this simple convergence of interests and look for ways to work together.

This means, first and foremost, that the topic of energy should be moved from the area of military-security affairs closer to field of diplomacy. It is through enhanced dialog that the long list of real and perceived problems in producer-consumer relations can be addressed and misconceptions removed. There is no need to invent additional forums for this purpose. Instead, existing institutions, both at the international (e.g., the International Energy Forum) and regional (e.g., the EU-Russia Energy Dialogue, EU-OPEC Energy Dialogue, etc.) levels can serve as platforms for an intensified dialog. It will be important to include emerging energy consumers, especially China and India, in any such dialog. In order for the West to work together with China, roles and intentions have to be understood correctly. At the same time, areas of cooperation where interests of all sides coincide should be identified: for example, all parties have an interest in securing the energy infrastructure from terrorist attacks. Instead of building its own fleet, China could work together with the US in order to make sure maritime routes remain safe. Other areas are less politicized, such as efforts to increase energy efficiency or develop renewable sources of energy.

Fostering NOC-IOC cooperation

In the area of economic relations, one way forward is for both sides to explore the many possible ways to engage in mutually beneficial relationships among IOCs and NOCs. Numerous examples indicate that it is possible to cooperate, even though the systems in the West

and in the energy-producing countries are different. The case of Saudi Arabia shows that even when IOCs are not allowed to take part in oil extraction, they may still be welcome to join in gas extraction – an industry that is only now emerging in Saudi Arabia. It is important that corporate actors understand that they will not be in a position to dictate the terms of the relationship anymore. This became evident in the case of Russia, where the state actively sought to nullify production-sharing agreements signed with foreign companies during the 1990s. There is also a reverse trend, with businesses from the Middle East and Russia increasingly investing in the downstream market of Europe and the US. IOCs could partner with NOCs, for example through the establishment of joint ventures, and thus assist NOCs in their foreign activities. In return, IOCs might gain a share in projects in the NOC home country.

The consumer nations do not generally regard the foreign expansion of NOCs as a positive development; there is fear that this increased dependence will expose them to even more political pressure and blackmail by producers. This is not to suggest that the US and Europe should simply open their doors to investment from these countries without requiring some degree of reciprocity. But the mere fact that the companies are investing in producer nations is a positive development; the foreign expansion of NOCs is increasing mutual interdependencies and raises the stakes for all sides. The greater the stake that a company owns in the whole chain of supply, the higher the responsibility and risks that it incurs, and the more it will be interested in keeping the fuel flowing. Moreover, increased business cooperation could spill over into politics and have overall positive effects for international relations.

Contact:
Jeronim Perovic
perovic@sipo.gess.ethz.ch

Call for Papers

for presentation at the annual conference of:

Verein für Socialpolitik;

Research Committee Development Economics

Development Economics & Policy

Hosted by the CIS (University of Zurich, ETH Zurich)
and the Institute for Environmental Decisions, IED (ETH Zurich) in Zurich, Switzerland

May 30-31, 2008

Keynote Speakers:

"Economic Growth and Economic Policy in the Development Process" (Fabrizio Zilibotti, Professor of Macroeconomics and Political Economics, Institute for Empirical Research in Economics, University of Zurich).

"Climate Policy and Burden Sharing" (Thomas Sterner, Professor of Environmental Economics, University of Gothenburg and President of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists).

Perspectives on Development

A number of guest speakers presented their work at a colloquium at NADEL (Nachdiplomstudium für Entwicklungsländer), an institute at the ETHZ specializing in development and transition policies. Very different perspectives on development issues came to the fore.

By Mark Thompson

Martin Brown, who works for the Swiss National Bank, presented recent work on the impact of centralized credit registries on credit market efficiency. Developing credit markets have two fundamental problems: information about borrowers is scarce and expensive, and credit contracts are nigh impossible to enforce. In the last 10 years, a number of transition countries have introduced centralized credit registries and have seen credit volumes increase as a result. A dearth of data has made answering the question of exactly how much of an impact such a registry has on repayment difficult; Brown's solution was classic—an experiment. As it turned out in his experiment, credit registries are an excellent way of enforcing loan repayment where contracts are otherwise unenforceable. This is because defaulting borrowers are cut off from future credit, where all lenders have access to the borrower's credit history. The major obstacle nevertheless remains: coordinating the lenders to set up such a registry.

One empirical observation that has caught researchers' attention is the significant and positive effect that rotating memberships of the UN Security Council has on the amount of American aid to developing countries. The ETH's own Axel Dreher presented his investigation into the political influence on multilateral aid distribution — his results confirm the relationship between rotation and aid, with one major caveat: namely, that while UNSC membership does increase the number of projects by about 10%, it does not seem to really change the total amount of aid countries receive. Moreover, rotation provides some measure of equity in the distribution of aid in that countries eventually become Security Council members, at which time more World Bank or IMF projects are allocated to them.

NADEL Director Rolf Kappel.

The old (and false) adage that money cannot buy happiness was put to the test within the context of a survey conducted amongst South Africans by Carola Grün, a labor market economist at the research arm of Germany's Labor Agency. Rather than simply assuming that rising incomes translate automatically into more happiness, Dr. Grün exploreed several possible social-psychological factors that could contribute to happiness more directly. Her research by no means shows that the economic paradigm is invalid: unemployment, low income, and temporary work all contribute significantly to unhappiness. Yet health, religion and safety from crime were three other significant contributors to happiness, the latter most likely because the poor are disproportionately affected by crime, raising interesting policy implications about the provision of security.

The ultimate negative is widely perceived to be death. Hence, the UN's Millenium Development Goals use infant mortality as a proxy for access to healthcare (an indirect measure of poverty). Isabel Günther, research fellow at Harvard's School of Public Health, specifically looked at the statistical issues that plague the use of such indicators, such as the fact that surveys tend to underestimate child mortality. Moreover, through a series of models, she showed that child mortality is of a different nature in that it does not always predict how good healthcare is for adults—child mortality being more strongly related to income than adult life expectancy. More worrying, perhaps, is the fact that while child mortality is declining in Africa, so is adult life expectancy. This raises the question of whether healthcare resources are simply being shuffled from one segment of the population to another.

Gary Goertz: Interview with a CIS Guest Professor

The CIS Newsletter interviewed Gary Goertz, guest professor at the CIS during the fall of 2007. While here, he taught qualitative methods on the MACIS program. Professor Goertz is especially known for his work on concepts and necessary conditions.

By Mark Thompson

Where are you from?
Originally from Kansas.

In what and where did you do your undergrad?
I did my undergrad in political science and mathematics in a small liberal arts college in Kansas. I chose political science because I had been interested in politics as a kid, and mathematics I suppose because my high school had been very strong in math and science. I went on to do a master's in mathematical statistics.

Why did you do your Ph.D. in Michigan? What did you do your thesis on?
It was the best for quantitative methods, which I liked, and it was the home of the Correlates of War Project.

What brought you here to Switzerland and the CIS?
I had been working with David Singer in Geneva on the Correlates of War. We had a falling out over a pay dispute. I then started working with Professor Bairoch on economic history there. I rerturned a couple of other times when he had a grant and I needed a job. Regarding coming to ETH, Bernauer [CIS director Tomas Bernauer] invited me to come for the semester; my wife is on her sabbatical right now so I could take unpaid leave, and it worked out well. The ETH has a nice program that makes it easy with everything for visiting professors, and maintains furnished apartments for them. This is the first time I have been to the German part of Switzerland.

Considering the amount of work you have done on methodology, do you consider yourself more of an epistemologist than a political scientist? Do you have a proclivity for one over the other?
I'll let other people say which I am. I just do both; they are complementary. Once you read the political science literature there were a host of theoretical and conceptual issues that became apparent. For example, when using the term advanced democracy, OECD countries are often used—but "OECD country" is not a concept—merely a political group—to belong to which, a country fills out forms in Paris. It would be good to get away from these types of conventions and back to concepts and theory, hence my methodological work.

If you were to entertain going into another profession, what would it be, and why?
Can't think of anything. I can't really imagine being in any other profession.

How did you come to the University of Arizona?
Like the bank robber: the bank is where the money is. You go where the jobs are typically.

I notice that Ragin, another well known methodologist, is at the University of Arizona—is that a coincidence?
Not entirely. I invited him to give a talk at the University of Arizona. Turns out that he had been looking to make a move, and the Sociology department made him a good offer to make the switch.

What do you like most about academia, and what do you like least?
The pay isn't great, but I love the flexibility and spending a lot of time doing the things which I am interested in. What I like least is the political infighting in the departments, even over methodology; I've seen even the grad students get caught in the cross-fire.

Having published over 40 articles and 7 books, we can see that you are a very prolific writer. In your opinion, what distinguishes your body of work and where would you place it in a broader perspective?
A lot of it starts with better formulation of concepts—what is an alliance, rivalry, conflict, etc. I start with the assumption that things are complex, and have gotten away from the notion that the world works simply through additive causality. There are a lot of datasets and concepts that get somewhat arbitrarily institutionalized. For conflict, it has been addressing the temporal dynamic, and to place conflict in its contextual relation. Methodologically, I put myself in the middle of the debate on quantitative [vs. qualitative methods]. It's a misnomer to call the type of methods I employ "qualitative" or even small-n because in fact it's often about employing formal logic to a set of concepts and variables with the implicit assumption that the world is complex.

Do you have any practical advice or tips for less experienced researchers on writing and getting published?
Don't be shy in your assertion. Have a clear message with take-away points. Young researchers often qualify their results so much that the point gets lost—in short, don't agonize over the details until

Gary Goertz spent a semester at the CIS in 2007.

you have to. You have to know the journals and what methods they are open to (European journals do seem more open to diverse methods), and pitch your article in that light. Just try to do good research, and find a journal that fits.

Could please you give us a bit of a preview of your work in progress?
Right now I am trying to answer the question of why regional intergovernmental institutions, such as ECOWAS or the EU, get into conflict management. Why security alliances are starting to cooperate with them. It's a big enough jump from finance regulation to trade regulation, but from economics to peace-keeping, for instance, it's even bigger.

We know that you have received a few grants from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Has there been a trend in the US towards collaborative research, like here in Europe? What's your opinion of collaborative research?

Yes, there has been a trend towards collaboration in the US because of the specialization of the various fields and their methods, and some topics simply are by nature interdisciplinary/collaborative like ecology or regional studies. But interdisciplinary research and collaborative projects have been a kind of a fad, and were rediscovered after their decline in the late 70s and 80s. Generally though the borrowing from other disciplines has been fruitful, for example political science borrowing from economics, but this can lead to conflict due to "cultural distance"—and sometimes these are very big distances to cover.

You have 2 to 3 books on necessary conditions: Necessary Conditions: Theory, Methodology, and Applications (Rowman& Littlefield 2002); Explaining War and Peace: Case Studies and Necessary Condition Counterfactuals (Routledge 2007). This appears to be a bit excessive given that the concept seems simple enough, but it also implies that the social science community is missing something. Could you briefly describe the common problems and issues with the use of necessary conditions?
For example, KKV [King, Keohane and Verba: Designing Social Inquiry (Princeton University Press 1994)] says you should never select on the dependent variable which is not true for necessary condition hypotheses. Statistical methods often ignore the specific character of necessary effects. You need but look at Ragin's books to see that thinking about research in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions has wide-ranging consequences.

Many thanks for your time. We hope to see you back in Zurich soon.
I'd like that.

Find out more about Gary Goertz's work at: http://polisci.web.arizona.edu/faculty/goertz.html

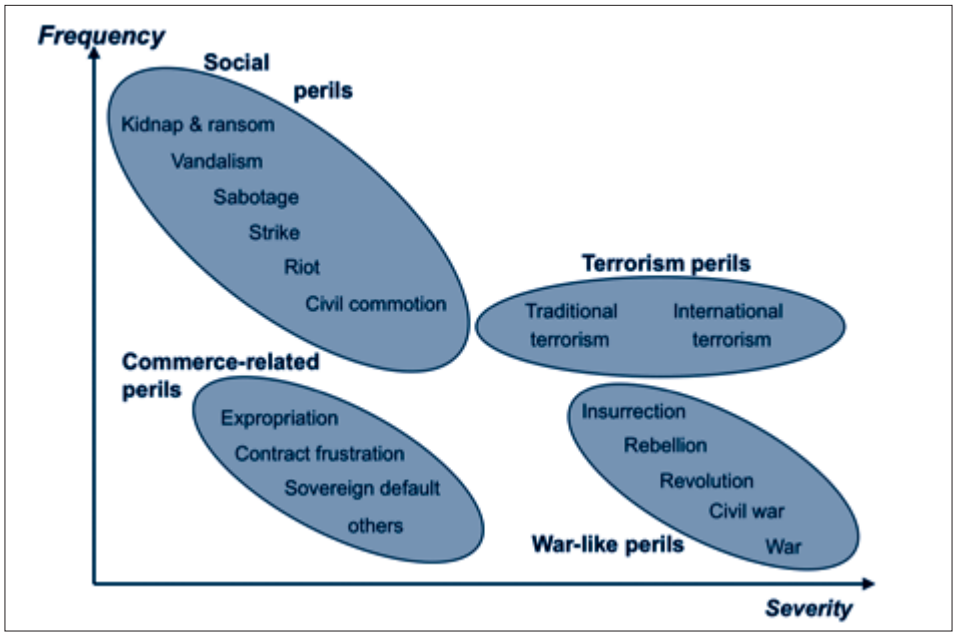
SwissRe at the CIS

Marco Lier and Rolf Tanner of SwissRe, the world's largest reinsurer, presented their recent findings on political risk and the insurance industry at the CIS's weekly colloquium.

By Mark Thompson

The 9/11 terrorist attacks resulted in a USD 21.4 billion loss to the insurance industry, demonstrating that assessing political risk accurately is essential for insuring against it. Political risk can take two forms: the first is the risk of adverse consequence of any political event on business; the second is specifically adverse action taken by a host government vis-à-vis a foreign private company. The latter form of political risk is to some extent insurable; political risk of the former form is not insurable. When it comes to political risk, the insurance industry can only operate with an actuarially useful definition. Unlike for political scientists, for whom the causality of political risk is the raison d'être, the frequency of risk and its severity represent an insurance company's bottom line, whereby an insurance company can only take onto its balance sheets a risk whose frequency of occurrence and severity of impact can be measured or at least estimated in a quantitative way with some confidence.

Because of the severity of potential losses, war is generally excluded from coverage. Interestingly, this is not the case for marine insurance, which has long covered war. This is because war has been a "peril of the sea" in shipping insurance, going back as far as to ancient Greece. The notion of world powers underpinning the international system, in part by ensuring order on high seas, has been wrought into insurance law, whereby war between any of the 5 UN Security Council members terminates most marine contracts automatically.



SwissRe, insights, March 2007.

One curiosity of the business has been the growth in "kidnap and ransom" insurance for overseas staff and executives. For example, Colombian paramilitaries have long been known to use kidnapping to augment their cash flow. Just as many states refuse to negotiate with terrorists to reduce their future risk to it, so, too, have states outlawed kidnap and ransom insurance because the existence of an insurance policy may raise aggregate risk in the long run.

Political risk insurance against such perils as expropriation, political violence, inconvertibility, etc., goes back to sovereign trade promotion policies during the 1930s to stabilize national economies reeling from the Great Depression. In this sense, political risk insurance is a tool, used by a number of government export credit agencies, for developmental promotion and more importantly in a subtle neo-mercantilist effort to boost the competitive advantage of the country's exporting industries. Today, political risk insurance has become an instrument for hedging the political risk associated with investing in emerging markets; banks often require companies investing in countries without investment grade ratings to carry such insurance.

One surprising attribute of financial markets is their resilience to traumatic political events: international stock markets needed only 40 days to recover after 9/11. Insurance companies only fared slightly worse than the rest of the market despite the massive charge against their balance sheets that was forthcoming due to the losses associated with the terrorist attacks in Washington DC and New York. This implies that financial markets have done a decent job of pricing political risk into their models — indeed markets seem to have come to terms with a world full of political risk. This is because investors have been able to diversify assets geographically and across a number of different financial instruments. Yet, the factor common to the majority of economies, oil, remains vulnerable to political risk, and will continue to be something the world's economy must continue to cope with — yet another argument for energy diversification.

Mutually Assured Instruction: CIS Away-Day 2007

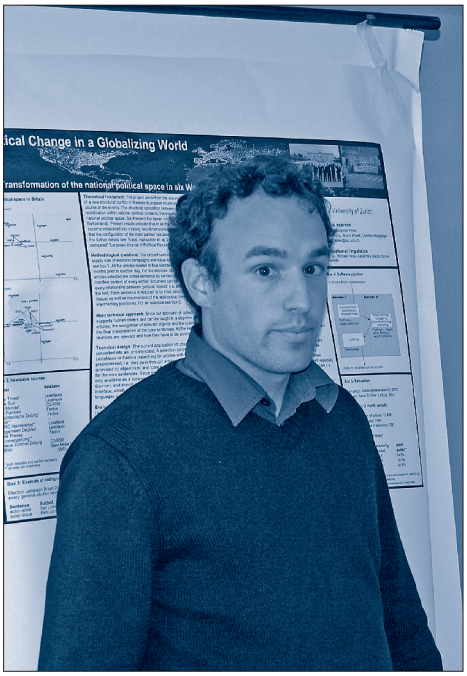
By Mark Thompson

The annual CIS "Uetliberg" colloquium was in 2007 in fact held in Forch, a small village overlooking the pristine Lake of Zurich. The usual suspects were to be found: CIS professors along with their doctoral entourages. The colloquium's theme this year was developing countries. Some of the presentations are reviewed below:

Katja Michaelowa, CIS professor of political economy and development, gave a presentation on the political economy of microfinance. Despite the widespread attention paid to microfinance in recent times (not least due to the Noble Peace Prize awarded to Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank, a pioneering microfinance lender), Michaelowa highlighted the agency problems inherent to microfinance as a business model and tool for poverty reduction, and the extremely political atmosphere in which micro-financial institutions operate, often at the expense of local money lending élites and government agencies.

Rolf Kappel, head of the ETHZ's postgraduate program for developing countries, tested "Kaldor's law." It states that economic growth is driven primarily by growth in the manufacturing sector, which has room for economies of scale and scope. What is novel about Kappel's research is that it tests the effects on growth of modern services (e.g., call centers, financial and IT services). The traditional line of argumentation has been that services do not exhibit the same potential as manufacturing for economies of scale and scope, and thus tend to lag behind the other sectors. Relatively high Indian growth rates, often attributed to services and their corresponding location and concentration within different Indian states, nevertheless allowed Kappel to test this common assumption. The result: while the distinction between industry and traditional services is merited, the more modern services, heavily reliant on specialized labor forces and information technology, do foster broader growth similarly to industry's role in Kaldor's original formulation of the law.

Thomas Bernauer, CIS director and professor of international relations, presented research using new data to examine the nature of democracy's impact on climate-friendly environmental legislation. The traditional line of thought is that democracies are more sensitive to environmental demands, but Bernauer proved this assumption false if actual CO2 emissions are measured rather than policy output — in other words, democracies talk the talk, but don't walk the walk. Switzerland is a perfect example of this disconnect between policy and outcome: very democratic, Switzerland ranks 13 (of 185) in terms of environmentally friendly legislation, but 141 in terms of emission levels.



It Takes Two to Tango

Lars-Erik Cederman, chair of the International Conflict Research Group at the CIS, has recently received a substantial grant from the European Science Foundation to lead a collaborative research project on civil war.

By Mark Thompson

The project received a SFr. 400 000 grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation and is set to run for about 3 years. The project constitutes a part of a European Collaborative Research Projects network that also includes nodes at the Centre for the Study of Civil War in Oslo (Scott Gates) and at the Department of Government in Essex (Kristian Skrede Gleditsch).

The main purpose of the project is to identify exactly who is involved in civil war, and why actors rebel. Rather than giving an explanation of civil war as simply a product of a number of factors, "Disaggregating Civil Wars" starts with a relational model instead of a state-centric one. The goal of the project is to bridge the gap between these two levels of analysis by systematically identifying "key actor constellations" driving civil war. The research design involves characterizing the relations between the actors in a region in conflict rather than simply conditions prevalent in countries in conflict (poverty, previous conflict, ethnic fractionalization, etc.). Conflict in this sense is not the result of latent conditions, it is rather an active configuration amongst the fighting factions.

Two major theories undergird the design of the Swiss node. The first is that ethnicity does matter in that it is an ordering principle that defines the relation between two groups; central to the analysis in this respect is the explanatory power of an ethnic group's access to state power. The second major contribution, which this project stands to make, is that it approaches civil war from a novel spatial perspective: data on all ethnic groups, their respective territorial domains and concentrations will be collected, thus permitting an analysis of ethnic conflict which draws both on spatial and ethnic factors. Based on this model, civil war is caused by two principal factors: the willingness of a group to rebel and its opportunity to do so. This comprehensive research approach permits an analysis of the process behind mobilization, whereby distance creates a sense of alienation and facilitates the logistics of insurgency, and demographics allow groups both to mobilize resources and to cultivate a notion that they have a right to power. The innovativeness of the project is not just limited to the theoretical contribution it will make. It also extends to the research consortium employing geographic information systems (GIS), spatial statistics and computational models. With this approach, the researchers demonstrate that conflict is fundamentally a dynamic phenomenon rather than merely a static one.

Lars-Erik Cederman's research focuses on internationl conflict.

Contact:
Lars-Erik Cederman
cederman@icr.gess.ethz.ch
Find out more about the project at:
http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/%7Eksg/essex_grow.html

ETH Honors Jakob Kellenberger

In the last issue of the CIS newsletter, we informed our readers about a lecture series on humanitarian law taught by Dr. Jakob Kellenberger, current president of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Since then Dr. Kellenberger has been bestowed with the title of ETH Ehrenrat (Honorary Councillor) for imbuing the ETHZ with the cosmopolitan and humanitarian values which guide it. The ETHZ's Honorary Council venerates people who advance science, fields essential to the ETHZ, and the Federal Institute of Technology itself.

Kellenberger was invited to teach at the ETHZ three years ago by CIS professor Thomas Bernauer, who was also instrumental in Kellenberger's nomination. He explains the nomination: "As a conversation partner and instructor, Dr. Kellenberger never ceases to impress with his exceptional analytical abilities, his healthy dose of humbleness, his courage to criticize, for justified demands, and to question his own views along with his profound leadership experience."

Jakob Kellenberger has been a key figure in the Swiss foreign policy establishment; he is a former deputy foreign minister and acted as vice-negotiator for Switzerland's entry into the European Economic Area during the early 1990s. Despite his extensive commitment to the ICRC, he will continue to teach his course on humanitarian law next semester, and the CIS looks forward to his return. According to him, his engagement here is a sort of "reality check."

Otto Kuenzle and CIS Director Thomas Bernauer in conversation with Mr and Mrs Kellenberger.

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Mark Thompson
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